

a technical documents list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to documents being developed to describe the desired product features,

B3 cont. wherein all parameters entered by the user into the engineer task list user interface, the quality assurance user interface and the technical documents list user interface are each defined in terms of a particular one of the product features entered into the feature list user interface.--

REMARKS

Applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for conducting the interview on June 20. In light of the Examiner's comments, Applicants are amending the claims to more clearly define the invention. Accordingly, claims 15, 17 and 23 are amended herein. Additionally, claims 18-22 are canceled without prejudice.

Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 USC 112. Applicants have canceled claim 18, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26 and 27 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by "User's Guide for Microsoft Project." Because claims 18-20 have been canceled, they are not addressed further. The remaining claims are addressed below.

Claim 15, as amended, recites a method for managing a release of a product. The claim recites the step of "linking each of the plurality of tasks with one of the plurality of product features." Applicants submit that Microsoft Project does not teach or suggest the "linking" step. For example, Microsoft Project does not teach or suggest linking tasks with product features. As

was discussed in the interview, from the portion of the reference provided with the Office Action, Microsoft Project does not even appear to utilize product features.

Claim 15 also recites the step of “defining a plurality of tasks, wherein each of said tasks is associated with one of said product features, the plurality of tasks being grouped into task types.” Microsoft Office does not appear to associate tasks with product features as is recited by claim 15. The Gantt chart on page 91 illustrates that the system described in Microsoft Office is task-centric and does not associate or link tasks with features of a product. For example, the “Task” column that is referred to in the Office Action is for entering tasks and not for entering features of a product. Additionally, the *Creating a Schedule* portion of Microsoft Office (page 5) states that “to create your own project schedule, enter the *tasks* that need to be done and how long they should take.” (emphasis added.) This scheduling material does not refer to product features or associating tasks with product features as is now recited in claim 15. As stated above, from the portion of the reference provided with the Office Action, Microsoft Project does not even appear to utilize product features. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 15 is distinguishable over the applied reference and request such an indication for claim 15 and claim 16, which depends from claim 15.

Referring now to claim 26, it recites the steps of “defining, for each feature, a plurality of tasks necessary to implement the feature” and “linking each task with its corresponding feature.” Based upon the reasons described above, Applicants submit that Microsoft Office neither teaches nor suggests either of these two steps. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection against claim 26 and claim 27, which depends from claim 26.

Claims 23 and 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Mora, US Patent No. 6,161,113. Applicants have amended claim 23 for clarity and submit that the claim is distinguishable over the applied reference. For example, claim 23 recites “an engineering task list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to tasks being completed to implement the product features . . . wherein the tasks correspond to one of the product features.” Applicants submit that Mora does not teach or suggest such a task interface. For example, Mora’s Figure 3, which is referred to in the Office Action, illustrates the views available for documents in the Management database. This interface is for accessing documents according to selected criteria. The interface of Figure 3 does not provide the ability to track information related to completed tasks that correspond to product features.

Additionally, Mora does not teach or suggest a “quality assurance user interface” as recited in claim 23. The Office Action states that such an interface is described at column 11, lines 46-48 of Mora. This material is in Appendix A and refers to a type of document that can be included in the Management databases described by Mora. (“Appendices A and B describe various documents that may be included in the Management and Technical databases. Col. 4, lns., 22-25.”) In other words, the referenced material in Mora refers to a type of document not to a user interface and, in particular, not to the claimed quality assurance user interface. Further, the cited material in Mora does not relate to the recited “desired product features.”

Claim 23 also recites that “the quality assurance user interface and the technical documents lists user interface are each defined in terms of a particular one of the product features entered into the feature list user interface.” Mora does not teach or suggest such a limitation and the Office Action does not appear to point to any material within Mora that allegedly teaches such a limitation.

In light of the above arguments, Applicants submit that claim 23 is distinguishable over the cited art and respectfully request such an indication for claim 23 and those claims dependent there from.

Claims 17, 21, 22, and 28 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Microsoft Project in view of Kroenke. Claims 21 and 22 have been canceled and the rejection with relation to these claims is now moot. Regarding claims 17 and 28, these claims are dependent claims, and Applicants submit that these dependent claims are allowable for the reasons described above for their corresponding independent claims.

In conclusion, Applicants submit that the claims as now presented are distinguishable over the cited references and request such an indication. If any questions or comments arise, the Examiner should call the undersigned at (720) 566-4125.

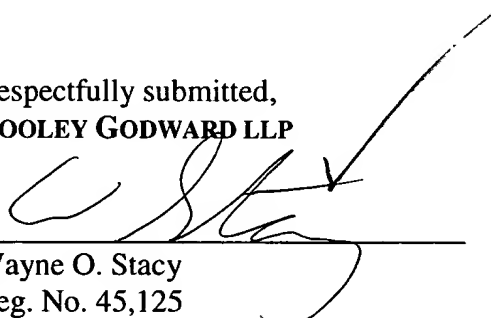
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16, 1.17, and 1.21 that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-1283.

Dated: June 25, 2002

Cooley Godward LLP
ATTN: Patent Group
One Freedom Square
Reston Town Center
11951 Freedom Drive
Reston, VA 20190-5656
Tel: (703) 456-8000
Fax: (703) 456-8100

Respectfully submitted,
COOLEY GODWARD LLP

By:


Wayne O. Stacy
Reg. No. 45,125

APPENDIX

-- 15. (amended) A method for managing a release of a product, comprising:

describing the product in terms of a plurality of product features;

entering a description of each of said product features, wherein said description comprises an instantiation of a feature list graphical user interface;

defining a plurality of tasks, wherein each of said tasks is associated with one of said product features, the plurality of tasks being grouped into task types;

linking each of the plurality of tasks with one of the plurality of product features;

entering a task progress development as an instantiation of a task-type graphical user interface, wherein the task-type graphical user interface is selected from a plurality of task-type graphical user interfaces, each corresponding to one of the task types; and

tracking a status of each product feature via the instantiated task-type graphical user interfaces.

17. (amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising:

storing the feature descriptions, task definitions and task progress developments in a relational database; and

wherein linking comprises:

linking each task definition and related task progress developments to their corresponding one of the plurality of product features [feature] through the use of relational database keys.

23. (amended) A system for managing a release of a product, comprising:

a product feature list user interface by which a user enters desired [feature] features of the product to be released;

an engineer task list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to tasks being completed to implement the [each of] the product features entered in the feature list user interface, wherein the tasks correspond to one of the product features;

a quality assurance user interface by which the user manages and tracks both quality assurance test plans and tests that are executed against the test plans and designed to ensure the functionality of the desired product features; and

a technical documents list user interface by which the user enters and tracks information related to documents being developed to describe the desired product features,

wherein all parameters entered by the user into the engineer task list user interface, the quality assurance user interface and the technical documents list user interface are each defined in terms of a particular one of the product features entered into the feature list user interface.--